



October 16, 2012

The Honorable Darrell Issa
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
2471 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
344 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Issa, Chairman Lieberman, Ranking Member Cummings and
Ranking Member Collins:

This letter will provide the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (Metro) fourth annual update of the progress made by Metro and the wireless carrier team, which consists of Verizon, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile, to provide wireless service in our system, as mandated in subsection (e) of Section 601 of Division B of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) (P.L. 110-432).

As you know, PRIIA provides \$1.5 billion over ten years to help rebuild and repair the Washington Metro system. Since its enactment four years ago, Congress has made annual appropriations pursuant to the legislation, and Metro has invested these funds to address National Transportation Safety Board recommendations and to bring the system back to a safe state of good repair, including replacing and rehabilitating rail and track, track circuit modules, broken escalators and elevators, decaying rail stations and replacing our oldest cars in the system. In fact, Metro celebrated a major milestone in the building of new rail cars last week, when we previewed for key stakeholders and our customers a mock up of the 7000 Series car. All of these improvements are focused on the intent of the authors of the Metro provision in the PRIIA legislation -- to make the system safer for all who rely on it.

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Transit Authority**

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Maryland and Virginia
Transit Partnership*

Since I wrote you last year, Metro and the carrier team continue to work closely together to provide wireless coverage throughout the system. The carriers have completed installation of infrastructure at all but three stations, and wireless service at remaining stations will be available once the carriers complete their testing process.

Despite our considerable progress, there is still significant work to be done to ensure wireless access throughout the entire system, which will require a level of coordination and logistical planning rarely seen in the transit industry. Moreover, we are further challenged by the fact that the work must take place as we also continue our highest priority of making urgent safety upgrades.

As you are aware, in the recently passed continuing resolution for Fiscal Year 2013, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees included an extension of the wireless installation deadline established in PRIIA until March 27, 2013. We are extremely grateful to the bipartisan leadership of these committees for the inclusion of this provision in the continuing resolution. And while Metro and the carrier team are accelerating our efforts to get the work in the tunnels completed, we currently estimate that we do not anticipate full coverage in the tunnels until December 2015.

The need to extend the deadline until 2015 is precipitated for two reasons. First, the fatal collision in June 2009 on Metro's Red Line resulted in a lengthy investigation. Metro's advancement of telecommunications projects in the aftermath of the tragedy was therefore impaired, as Metro focused on immediate safety issues raised by the accident. Metro's prioritization of these safety matters continues today.

Second, a project of this magnitude and complexity has required significantly more time than any of the parties envisioned when PRIIA was drafted in 2008. In essence, Metro and the carriers have been tasked with building a world-class wireless network throughout the second largest rail transit agency in the country. To deliver this goal, Metro and the carriers have had to first assess the complete scope of work and then find the right equipment, assets and personnel. Moreover, Metro and the carriers have had to ensure that all personnel meet Metro's rigorous safety and training requirements, some of which take longer than 12 months to complete.

And, work in the tunnels is limited to hours when Metro is not running trains or shutting down track to address urgent safety matters and system reliability. As the work progresses in the tunnels, wireless service will become available to Metro rail customers.

We will continue to keep the Committee updated on our progress. But we will also need your leadership in the months ahead as we seek the enactment of a more realistic timeframe that will allow installation to move forward in a responsible manner. Of course we will also continue to appreciate your tremendous support and efforts as we return the system to a safe and reliable state of good repair.

If you have any questions, please contact Regina Sullivan, WMATA's Director of Government Relations, at 202-962-1632 or rsullivan@wmata.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Sarles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Sarles".

Richard Sarles
General Manager and
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Honorable Ben Cardin	The Honorable Gerry Connolly
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski	The Honorable Jim Moran
The Honorable Mark Warner	The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
The Honorable Jim Webb	The Honorable Daniel Inouye
The Honorable Steny Hoyer	The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen	The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Donna Edwards	The Honorable Tom Latham
The Honorable Frank Wolf	The Honorable John Oliver